

THE
CHURCH-NIGHT
SERVICE

EVERETT S. SMITH

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THE
Church-Night
Service

BY
EVERETT S. SMITH

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PREFACE

AFTER spending a great amount of thought and energy in trying to keep my prayer-meetings alive, and becoming more and more disgusted with the hollow mockery and sentimental appeal that repelled rather than attracted, I decided that a radical change in the type of meeting was most desirable and necessary. I found the elders of the church responsive to my scheme, and it was with little difficulty that I inaugurated the "mid-week meeting" which, at Hopkinsville, Ky., had an average attendance of more than three hundred for six years in succession.

When I came to Miami, Fla., I had the opportunity of testing this plan under most adverse circumstances, and the satisfaction of realizing that it was successful here also. Until the visit of the hurricane

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on Sept. 17 and 18, 1926, when our church was seriously damaged, numbers of our homes totally destroyed, and hundreds of our members were forced to return to their native States, our great meetings continued. During the rebuilding of our city and our personal resources, our meetings of necessity have been seriously affected. However, by the time this appears in print we will be rejoicing in as great meetings as before our disaster.

There are many features of this plan that are not applicable to all large churches, and most certainly not applicable to the smaller ones. However, I believe this plan, modified and adapted to the church contemplating using it, will prove helpful in many ways, and altogether worthy of the attempt. The majority of the features are adaptable to any congregation anywhere, and, if enthusiastically appropriated and used, will solve many problems that vex the average preacher. If this re-

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lation of my experience and submission of my plans for conducting a mid-week service will help and encourage any of my brethren in the ministry, I shall be extremely gratified.

MIAMI, Florida.

E. S. S.

THE CHURCH-NIGHT SERVICE

CHAPTER I.

THE PRAYER-MEETING AND CAUSES OF FAILURE.

THERE is a growing tendency among the larger city churches, as well as the rural churches, to discontinue altogether the Wednesday night prayer-meeting. If there ever was a reason for such a meeting, that reason still exists, and to the thoughtful observer the present-day apathy even among members of the church is all the more emphatic argument for a great inspirational and devotional service at the mid-week hour.

As there is an indisputable reason for a mid-week service, there is also a good

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reason for the discontinuance of the old-fashioned prayer-meeting. We have erred not so much in discontinuing the old, but in failing to recognize the logical substitute that stands upon the threshold and clamors for recognition. We have no quarrel with the old-fashioned prayer-meeting. It was splendid in its day, but its day is past. The new-model automobile is in no sense a reflection upon the first model, but rather a pleasing evidence of the wisdom and good judgment of the manufacturers. The marble baptistery is no reflection upon the rippling waters of the murmuring brook, and the beautiful pipe-organ is by no means an evidence of our disdain for the little old reed organ of former days.

We have come to realize that people will not purchase the old-model car, and for good reasons. We must realize that most people prefer to be baptized in a baptistery and listen to the pipe-organ,

Causes of Failure

and for similar good reasons. In other words, the day has come when the manufacturers of models and orders of service must put out some new models, if they would reach the masses, and, in so doing, lose nothing of value appertaining to the former type, but adding much to satisfy the demand of the present, which is altogether legitimate.

It has been said that the tyranny of dead men is one of the greatest foes to Christian union and progress. The tyranny of custom and precedent is undoubtedly responsible in large measure for our failure to meet the need to-day with an adequate and efficient mid-week program. For the past ten years I have experimented with the mid-week service almost as scientifically as a chemist in his laboratory, and have arrived at some very definite conclusions, and discovered some important facts which, though they may be doubted, most certainly can not be dis-

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proved. There are reasons for the failure of the usual Wednesday night prayer-meetings.

1. *As a rule, we never desired them.* We tolerated and respected them. We did not relish them, neither did we consider them by way of real preparation. In many instances the Sunday evening service is going the way of the prayer-meeting, and for the same reason.

2. *They were regarded as customary.* They were planned and attended with about the same enthusiasm that the housewife shows toward the customary household tasks—a customary, expected, regular, proper performance of duty—no more. Even a parting kiss that is given merely because it is customary loses its sweetness. I have returned from some prayer-meetings with the feeling of disgust in my soul that I have seen on the face of a wife after her husband had pantomimed a good-by kiss with about as

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much conscious emotion as was required in slapping his hat on his head.

3. *The nature of their organization and direction invited failure.* Not having some special reason for special prayer once every week permitted a "prayer-meeting" to drift upon the rocks of stereotyped and perfunctory prayer. If we were at war, or a great calamity had befallen us, or a great epidemic was sweeping the community, we could easily find a motive for special prayer, and our "prayer-meetings" would sparkle with timeliness and appropriateness. But we can't provide such occasions throughout the year, even if we desired them, and to rest the merits of the meeting merely upon the appeal to prayer in general is to court immediate failure, for reasons too apparent to mention.

Constrained to regard the "prayer-meeting" as indeed a "meeting for prayer," we were seldom privileged to vary

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the program, and the numbers reached were necessarily very limited, ultimately convincing us of the inadvisability of "opening up the auditorium," and finally resulting in abandoning even the "prayer-meeting-room" gatherings. So came about the demise of the "prayer-meeting" in many of our churches, both large and small.

CHAPTER II.

THE POSSIBILITY OF MAINTAINING A MID-WEEK SERVICE

1. *Under most adverse circumstances.* Even under the most adverse circumstances I have thoroughly demonstrated, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the absolute possibility of maintaining a large, interesting, gripping, inspiring and helpful mid-week service. I frankly admit it is not a "prayer-meeting" *only*. No more so than the Sunday morning or evening services may be termed a prayer-meeting, yet where we find as effectual and fervent prayer (and oftentimes more so) as in the erstwhile prayer-meeting.

2. *Whole community can be sold on idea.* The whole community can be sold on the claim of the church to a mid-week service.

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When the church, with a real mid-week program and a bit of determination, lays claim to one hour of the busy week at mid-week time, business and pleasure will give heed and will ultimately respond with splendid co-operation.

After about one year of persistent effort to assert the claim of the church to such an hour, the luncheon clubs, bridge clubs and others, dances and pleasure parties of various kinds, lodges, chambers of commerce, and like groups, lyceums, theaters, carnivals, etc.—in fact, all kinds of groups and organizations in a certain city—paid homage to the church on Wednesday night, and never a meeting was planned or a program begun or a party held at the hour the church had chosen for its mid-week service. I make bold to ask if this same thing can not be done in practically every community?

3. *Secret of possibility is twofold.* The secret of this possibility is twofold—or-

Maintaining a Mid-week Service

ganization and *program*. There is no reason why the mid-week service should not be ranked on a par with either of the Sunday services, and I am not unmindful of the call of the Supper of our Lord. I am merely seeking to reveal the real value of the mid-week service to the entire program of the church. The church program heretofore has been built around the Sunday services, and the "prayer-meeting" has been absolutely ignored. A great choir sings on Sunday, but not on Wednesday night. The salaried singers and the pipe-organ perform on Sunday, but not on Wednesday night. The orchestra plays at Bible school, and the Endeavorers train, but not on Wednesday night. In fact, the money and brains of the church, as far as organization is concerned, are spent in the interest of Sunday, primarily. The possibility of the maintenance of a real mid-week service becomes apparent when we really and vitally include Wednesday night.

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Then, too, we have slighted our mid-week service in the matter of program. If we were as half-hearted and listless in the preparation for Sunday as we are for Wednesday, we would find those services waning also, as indeed they are in some places, and for no other reason. Our beloved Prof. J. W. McGarvey said to us young preachers in class one day: "Young gentlemen, you need not expect to be called to the pastorate of some city church when you graduate and go out into the field. You will probably be disappointed in discovering that the people do not seem to realize your unusual ability, and you will find yourself the pastor of some little church far out in the country. But, break brush, young gentlemen, break brush and make so much noise that the regions round about will gather in to behold this John the Baptist in the wilderness." We have not been "breaking brush" on Wednesday night. When we provide a gripping pro-

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gram of real merit, backed up by efficient organization, indicative of the expenditure of much effort and energy, our Wednesday evening programs may become, as I have heard many say, “the most delightful of all the services of the church.”

CHAPTER III.

THE VALUE OF THE MID-WEEK SERVICE TO THE CHURCH.

1. *It is a clearing-house for church business.* Many of our churches give entirely too little consideration to their business interests. Sundays are usually too crowded for due consideration of vital business problems. Delightful programs built around such matters as preparation of budget, setting up every-member canvass, quarterly and semi-annual reports by all departments, extension plans, music, etc., can be presented in a most thorough and effective manner without endangering the attractiveness of the meeting in the least.

2. *It is a clearing-house for themes and subjects impossible of handling at other times.* A good Bible-school teacher never

Value of the Mid-week Service

has enough time in the lesson period to give all he has in his heart. Even so the successful preacher never has enough Sundays for the many themes and topics he feels he should consider with his congregation. A large mid-week service affords him another opportunity each week, equally as appropriate and as effective as the Sunday service. Members of the church have favorite themes; non-members have pet subjects; community organizations have interests; our brotherhood has problems—all of which can be appropriately and interestingly considered at the mid-week hour.

3. *It is a clearing-house for various local church activities.* The department of pageantry and dramatics can use the mid-week service most satisfactorily. The work of the recreational department, Boy Scouts, Camp-fire Girls, Bible-school classes, women's organizations, special study classes, Christian Endeavorers, etc.,

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can be beautifully and impressively demonstrated. All such demonstrations and participations in the programs of the mid-week service are of incalculable value to the church.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELATION OF THE MID-WEEK SERVICE TO CHURCH-NIGHT PROGRAMS.

THERE is much speculation to-day as to the practical adaptation of typical church-night programs to the various types of churches. I have read much that has been written upon the subject; have visited a number of churches using various church-night programs; have seen some continue with rigid regularity for several months—but have never yet discovered a uniform church-night program scheme that could be regarded as adaptable to many churches, even of the same type. Our failure to devise a standard church-night program, I think, may be traced to the fact that we have felt that a program might be built which could be

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procured and adjusted to our task as a set of harness is adjusted by buckling up or letting out the straps. The same principle is involved in working out a satisfactory church-night program, as is set forth in our Master's words regarding the Sabbath: "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." The church-night program must be made for the church, not the church for the program.

It has been my experience from the observations I have made that in many instances the spirit of the service on church night was miserably crushed beneath the weight of the monotonous and arduous preparation of the regular, unavoidable and indispensable church-night supper. Because, in so many instances, the supper had attracted the crowds, it was regarded as the only and indispensable means of gathering the crowds, and around it the entire program revolved. Whenever and wherever I have lectured upon the theme

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of the mid-week service and questions were asked, like the name of Abou Ben Adhem, the supper question led all the rest. Another firm conviction I have is that, while, of course, there is much virtue in the supper feature, the *sun* around which all the planets of other church-night features revolve is the *mid-week service*. It alone contains the practical and spiritual possibilities of uniformly regular and systematic occurrence week after week, month after month, season after season and year after year. It carries the preponderance of appeal to the church membership, and to the public at large, for the recognition of the church's claim to an undisturbed hour at the mid-week time. Then, when the membership recognizes this claim and are willing to give that hour to the consideration of the affairs of the kingdom of our Lord, it is not such a difficult task to persuade them to devote other hours before and after the mid-week

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service, and ultimately resign the whole evening to the interests of the church, thus making easily possible and practical many other subordinate features of church night.

When the mid-week service is subordinated to any other feature, or is regarded as merely a cog in the wheel, there is none other that has the appeal, the charm or the challenge to carry a whole evening's program through the vicissitudes of long, trying months and years. After a brief discussion of the relative virtues of other important features of church night, it shall be my happy task to give an analysis of the mid-week service, by which I hope to show and prove that my conclusions as to its place and power are altogether justifiable, logical and correct.

1. *The church-night supper.* In the smaller church, both city and rural, a specially prepared dinner with an attractive menu, and with a committee boosting ticket sales, has brought about a good at-

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tendance for several months, but ultimately resulted in either a money-making proposition for the organization serving it, or the collapse of the organization or group preparing it on the voluntary cost basis. In the first case, it proves to be of little permanent value to church night, and in the other fails because the results do not seem to justify the effort. In the large church, where from three to five hundred must be served, the time consumed, the number of people required in serving, and the space occupied when a special dining-room is not provided, have seriously affected other features of church night. From considerable investigation and experimentation, I submit the following adjustment of the church-night supper to the program in general.

(a) Set up a thorough organization of a culinary department for the whole church, the size to be determined by the size and program of the church. Select a

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general superintendent, with an assistant superintendent for each day of the week, provided with a definite number of helpers who have indicated what day they could help in culinary service. In this way the task is distributed, and whatever time may be desired for a church lunch or dinner will be satisfactorily handled by the group who have indicated *that* day as the time when they can serve without inconvenience or hardships to themselves.

(b) The general superintendent, or either of the six assistant superintendents, will have full knowledge of all kitchen equipment and full authority to use same. This group, together with the minister, educational director, Bible-school superintendent, chairman of the church board, or head of any department or organization, can determine menus ranging from a sandwich and coffee, costing perhaps fifteen cents, to the most elaborate dinner. Prices, therefore, of various types of lunches and

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dinners may be definitely established, and any organization or group desiring a meal at the church will need to do only three things: determine the *price* they wish to pay for the meal, set the *time*, and fix the *number* of plates desired.

This information may be given to the church office, or to the general superintendent of the culinary department direct. From this point the *modus operandi* is as follows:

The office communicates to Mrs. A., superintendent of the culinary department, the desire of the Bible-school superintendent for a 25c. supper for sixty at a teachers' conference on Friday evening at 6:30; also a dinner for a special meeting of the church board to cost \$1.00, on Monday evening, at 7:30, for forty-five members; a dinner to cost 50c. for the Young Women's Mission Circle, on Wednesday evening, at six o'clock; twenty plates desired; and so on and so on.

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(c) The general superintendent, Mrs. A., communicates with Mrs. B., the "Monday" superintendent, relative to the church-board dinner; with Mrs. C., the "Wednesday" superintendent, relative to the Mission Circle, and with Mrs. D., the "Friday" superintendent, relative to the teachers' conference, and these, in turn, with their helpers, provide the established menus for the stated number, at the time when they are able, willing and glad to render service. In this way there is never an inconvenient time, for some one is always ready to serve. The payment may be made individually, or from the treasury of the organization being served, or in whatever way the church or its organizations or individuals may determine. In establishing the price of the plates, the culinary department may add a certain percentage of profit to keep up the equipment of the department, or this may be provided through the church budget and

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the meal served at actual cost. Such meals are always cheaper and far better than can be obtained at a restaurant, whether it be the 25c. or \$1.00 meal, for the reason that there is no charge for service and no overhead.

(d) The determination of the type of meal desired is a very important matter. I have known Bible-school workers' conferences actually to go on the rocks because of an enforced dinner of a certain type in connection therewith. Many laboring men who need a heavy meal at dinner will not attend a meeting where a little salad on a lettuce leaf and other dainties that would satisfy others are served. Frequently a dinner that is served at considerable expense and much effort, in the belief that it will guarantee a successful meeting, proves to be a far greater handicap than help. In almost every letter of inquiry that I receive, and invariably at conferences, institutes, etc., the following

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question is asked: "Would you advise a supper in connection with the church-night program?" I usually parry with the question, "*For whom?*" A supper *for whom*—for any and every body in order to swell the crowd? Never! It is unwise, inadvisable and decidedly uneconomic. As to whether or not a meal should be served in connection with church night, it only remains to ascertain whether or not some organization deems it helpful to have a certain type meal served on this night. I have had as many as four different organizations served at once on a certain Wednesday night, and the following Wednesday night there was no meal at all served. The demand for such service, arising from a careful and thoughtful study of the need on the part of the specific organization concerned, alone should be the determining factor in using it, and not because it may be customary or that it may be regarded as a means of increas-

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ing attendance at the mid-week service. Too much emphasis can not be placed upon an efficient culinary department, so organized as to serve different-priced meals at any time, without undue trouble and annoyance.

2. *Other church-night features.* Another element of a uniform and complete church-night program that presents a difficulty in adjusting it to the other integral parts is the meeting of the church board. Frequently, for various reasons, they do not desire to meet on Wednesday night, and to coerce them to do so is unpleasant and unwise, and their failure to do so breaks the plan of a uniform church-night program. Even when the board willingly agrees to meet on Wednesday night, it often requires such a period of time for its session that the limitations placed by the order of service must be broken, and conflicts arise which are unwholesome and unprofitable. Of course, where a church

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is so splendidly organized, where the members of the board are so punctual in their attendance, and where the business is dispatched with such machine-like rapidity and precision as that, when the time period assigned expires, they adjourn to the other meeting following, the ideal church-night program may be carried out. But I have not seen that church, though probably it exists. However, I am not writing this for the exception, but for the great rank and file of our congregations.

Presuming that Wednesday night is the one usually chosen for church night, I shall speak of Wednesday night as such. I am thoroughly convinced that we should have a "church night" during the week. I am not convinced, however, that a shifting of all meetings to that night, and an articulation of various organizations in a unified program, is by any means a definition of the term. I am confident, though, that church night should mean that the

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church lays claim to an evening during the week; that the community at large respects this claim, and that the church plans so intelligently and works so earnestly for that mid-week service as that, not only the church membership, but the entire community, is benefited, and church night becomes an important and anticipated hour on the calendar every week in the year.

It should not be determined by the fact that a combination of meetings has been arranged, or that a concentration of various activities has been brought about upon that occasion. For it may be very detrimental to some organizations to be required to subscribe to time limits and uniform regulations in order that a program of a *supposed* church night may be carried forward. When a great, challenging mid-week service is conducted week after week, it is perfectly natural for various organizations to gravitate toward Wed-

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nesday night for their meetings, as it is to their interest to do so, while there are others which, notwithstanding the pull and enthusiasm of a great, successful mid-week service, should not hold their meetings on that evening. Therefore, when we divorce church night from the idea that it means an inescapable supper, and a rigid adherence to a demand for a concentration of all meetings upon that night, and come to understand that it means *a night during the week* (usually Wednesday) *when the church, in all its power and organized form, comes together for worship and service*, we shall have little trouble in solving the problem with which the demise of the old "prayer-meeting" has confronted us.

CHAPTER V.

COMMITTEES AND THEIR SELECTION.

1. *Nature of the committee.* A large measure of the success of the mid-week service, as I have conducted it for the past ten years, is attributable to the scheme of organization adopted. A committee of four was selected for each Wednesday night, and it was distinctly understood by all that no one would be asked to serve twice in the same capacity during one year.

In beginning this scheme, the chairman of each committee should be a man, the second person invariably a woman, and the third and fourth men. The chairman is the *leader* of the meeting, and provides the program exclusive of the music. The woman is given charge of the music and

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provides all special music and makes all selections of songs, delivering her music program to the leader, who has full direction of the meeting. The third member is a *booster*, and is held responsible for advertising and boosting the service. The fourth is a *handshaker*, and organizes a group around him to serve as a reception committee and extend a greeting to every one entering any and all doors. The committee for each Wednesday night must be of the same design, and composed of four members—no more, no less.

2. *Method of selection.* Extreme care and good judgment should be exercised in the selection of the first thirteen committees. I found it advisable to make the appointments for three months in advance. The success or failure for the entire year often rests in the selection of the first thirteen committees. The best speakers, leaders and presiding officers the church membership affords should be chosen as

Committees and Their Selection

the first thirteen leaders or chairmen of the committees. These may or may not be members of the church board. Because one happens to be an elder or deacon does not prove his ability above a man who may not be an officer to lead a mid-week service. Leadership and ability to preside acceptably over a meeting are the determining factors in the selection of the first thirteen chairmen.

Likewise, it does not follow that the leader of the choir, because of such position, is more resourceful than any one else in providing special music that will prove unusually attractive. However, ordinarily, such musicians as choir directors, leaders and soloists are to be desired first of all. But the characteristic that should influence the choice of the first thirteen women is the ability to reach out and secure the very best talent the city or community affords; also, to make song selections in keeping with a great mid-week service.

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The *booster* is a very distinct type, and every church has one or more, although he may never attend "prayer-meeting" and his church attendance be rather irregular. This should in nowise affect his appointment on this committee, and such men as promoters, sports enthusiasts (especially golfers and fishermen), real-estate dealers and insurance agents are typical boosters for a mid-week service. Salesmanship, advertising ability, pluck and enthusiasm are what I look for in my boosters. Of course, it is objected immediately that "we haven't such fellows in our church," or "we haven't thirteen such fellows." Be that as it may, look for the fellow that looks like such a fellow! Eat the best apple first, and you will always have the best you have left, and yet be using the best continually.

Later on we will discover how to discover leaders and boosters for all the services to follow those where we think we

Committees and Their Selection

have exhausted our supply. In the selection of the handshaker, I do not require any of the characteristics mentioned above. I usually seek the unknown, retiring, timid and oftentimes speechless individual as my handshaker. He can possibly smile, undoubtedly grunt, and most assuredly shake hands. Here is a most fruitful recruiting-ground for boosters and leaders. In the past years I can count by the scores splendid leaders that were, at their first mid-week service, embarrassed, tongue-tied handshakers. There is no limit to the number he may ask to assist him, and, being of such a timid disposition, he usually has a sufficiency of assistants, and supplies the meeting with a pretty good-sized audience that would not ordinarily be present.

It has been previously stated that these appointments are made for at least one quarter in advance. They are made and published in the church bulletin without

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the knowledge or consent of those appointed. Of course, I am sure of at least the first four committees. I know they will gladly consent, though I may be more or less doubtful of many of the others. This problem will be discussed later on. Some of those appointed, especially the doubtful ones, may not be present at service when the bulletins are distributed. In fact, their church attendance may be very irregular, or practically nil, so I send to each of them a marked copy of the bulletin by mail. This, in most cases, brings a response—not always favorable. The matter is finally disposed of through the “follow-up system.”

3. *The follow-up system.* I have drafted two sets of four form letters, one for each member of the committee, and, as all committees are of the same design and no one serves twice in the same capacity, these letters can be used continuously for one year. One set I post one month in ad-

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vance, and the other set two weeks in advance, of the meeting to be held by each committee, respectively. When this schedule becomes completely operative, both sets of letters go out from the office every week. In most cases the marked copy of the bulletin brings a response. In some, the first form letter brings the response. If there is no response immediately after this letter, then a personal interview is the last resort.

Should there be an unfavorable response by mail to the bulletin announcement, a personal interview is held immediately. If the party calls upon me to convince me of the impossibility of his performance, I usually convince him that he can and should consent to serve. The same thing often happens when he writes me his regrets and thinks he has disposed of the matter. I call upon him and convince him of his ability and duty. There are times when I fail, and, when I realize

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that it is practically impossible for certain ones to serve, I make substitute appointments, but, for psychological reasons, never give any publicity to the change until one week previous to the time of the service in question.

The first of the form letters mentioned above sets forth the respective duties of the member, carries suggestions as to when and how often the committee should meet, and reminds him of the fact that he only serves once in a whole year. The second letter is a reminder of the imminence of his meeting, the importance of having everything ready by this time, and proffers the assistance of the pastor in any and every way. However, I am usually called into conference with committees before the first letter is received; nevertheless, it goes out just the same. It is a pleasure to sit in a committee in an advisory capacity when the other fellows are assuming the responsibility.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEETING ANALYZED.

1. *The leader and his subject.* As soon as committees are appointed, the chairmen who willingly accept the appointment will besiege the pastor with requests for subjects of discussion and themes for their programs. This is exactly what is desired, and offers the pastor an opportunity to clear up divers situations and dispose of many annoying problems that can only be satisfactorily handled and disposed of by those who create the situations and present the problems.

In practically every congregation there are those who are continually suggesting to the pastor subjects for sermons and themes for discussion. Among a large number that have been suggested to me as

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most timely and appropriate sermon topics, with some such remark as this, "Why don't you preach on ——— sometimes? I think our church needs some sermons along that line," are such subjects as the following: Dancing, card-playing, horse-racing, gossip, political corruption, the Ku Klux Klan, divorce, etc. It goes without saying that any minister who would resort to such a source for his sermon topics, and use them when and where the suggester indicates, would find himself in as embarrassing a predicament as one who would try all the remedies that are gratuitously suggested by his callers when he is afflicted with insomnia or nostalgia. However, to ignore the petitioner, or even appear indifferent to the sincere conviction and solicitousness of the well-meaning suggester, is indeed inadvisable.

The mid-week service, led by one who perhaps has been a rather persistent suggester, becomes an efficient boomerang.

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The very subject he desires to have aired, or expounded, or unmasked, as the case may be, can very properly be suggested by the pastor and the argument made that the leader—the *daddy* of the idea—is unquestionably the most proper one to lead the discussion. The mid-week service, therefore, becomes a hopper into which the ashes of ideas and plans and theories, that have been burning in the heart fireplaces, can be poured, which the gentle showers of combined, collective and unimpassioned congregational wisdom can concentrate into a lye that may be used in the production of a cleansing product with which the entire congregation can be cleansed of various kinds of erroneous, useless and divisive theories and harmful speculations.

There is no unusual danger to the welfare of the mid-week service in making it such a “catch-all.” On the contrary, it is a very wholesome procedure. Not all

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of the leaders, however, are suggesters, and many are receptive to suggestions of subjects of community-wide interest, and are able and willing to secure the services of speakers, local or otherwise, who are especially prepared to discuss the theme chosen for the meeting.

The chairman or leader, as has been stated, presides and conducts the entire program. He is responsible for the subject and the speaker or speakers. The following division of time has been found most desirable:

Devotions	15 minutes
Special Music.....	10 “
Speaker	20 “
Booster	5 “
Announcements	5 “
Song and Benediction.....	5 “

The meeting should begin on time and close at the expiration of one hour. Promptness in opening and closing the

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service is extremely important. The chairman, realizing that he will lead only one meeting during the year, can well afford to put forth much effort to provide a program and speaker that will be most attractive and enjoyable. He will hold several meetings of his committee, begin the preparation of his program many weeks ahead of the date he serves, and have plenty of time to secure a prominent speaker, if he so desires.

2. *The music possibilities.* The woman on the committee is given full charge of the music. She selects the songs that are to be used, and her program should be followed without the least change or substitution. Though in some instances her selections may not have been what I would have chosen or preferred, I made it a rigid rule to use her selections. Frequently a song was chosen which seemed to be unfamiliar to every one save the woman who chose it, but we sang that song.

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One of the reasons for this rule is that there are those in every congregation who have favorite songs that, according to them, are never sung. They frankly state, when accepting a position on a committee, that they have certain songs they want to use, and we would not deprive them of the joy they seem to derive from digging up songs of their own peculiar liking and defending their merits against more popular airs. Many times I have seen our director lead the singing of a song he had never heard or used before. In adhering strictly to the policy of using the songs selected by the women in charge, we satisfied their desire, learned many new songs, and discovered the musical tastes of numbers, which was of considerable value in many ways.

From the very first mid-week service in this specially organized plan, every musical organization of the church was enlisted. The director of music understood

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that it was his duty to be present. The choir consecrated itself to the support of this meeting, and every member pledged his presence. A children's chorus was organized for special use on Wednesday night, and a special platform was built for them. Charles Reign Scoville has aptly said that "if we expect great things *from* God, we must plan great things *for* God." We planned to include and use our children in every meeting, and they *never* failed us. During school months I have actually known numbers of children to forego their play after school in order to prepare their lessons so they might attend the mid-week service and take their place in the children's chorus.

The Bible-school orchestra was also enlisted, and in a short time became so interested in the success of the mid-week service that it became a permanent feature. Ultimately our mid-week service was supported by the following music organ-

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izations: A choir of one hundred voices, a children's chorus of forty voices, an orchestra of twenty pieces, a male chorus, male quartet, mixed quartet and a Treble Clef Club. The pipe-organ and piano were used, and, when these forces burst forth in praise to God, no wonder that our audiences averaged over three hundred for every Wednesday night.

The outstanding result, however, from our plan of giving to a different woman each Wednesday night the privilege and responsibility of providing special music, was our discovery of and benefit from the resourcefulness of these women. To illustrate: Suppose the appointment of committees is made January 1 for three months, and Mrs. B. is in charge of the music for Wednesday night, March 20. She has a niece in a distant city who is a violinist or vocalist of note and who plans to visit her soon. Mrs. B., desiring to make her program the best of all, and

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also desiring the community to hear and enjoy her talented relative, arranges the visit of her niece so that she can be visiting in the city the week of March 20 and play or sing at the mid-week service when Mrs. B. is in charge. I have witnessed the operation of just such a plan, and similar ones, dozens of times. I have heard and enjoyed brilliant artists whom I never would have heard and never would have known had it not been for this scheme.

In the many years of experience in these meetings, it has been my privilege to use in these services distinguished individuals from New York to California, and from Canada to Mexico. People have appeared on our programs, as a result of the reach and resourcefulness of our members, whom I personally could never have reached or known. Let me call attention once again to the virtue of the plan of asking a person to serve in this capacity but once a year. This being true, the com-

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mittee member feels justified in expending considerable effort in preparing a worthwhile program. Permission is given any committee member to exchange Wednesdays with another serving in like capacity, where it is entirely satisfactory to both and advances the interest, perchance, of one or both meetings. Let it not be understood that the women of the congregation serve only in this capacity of music selection. I have previously stated that *at the beginning* of this organization scheme men were invariably chosen as the chairmen and leaders, and women placed in charge of the music. As the meetings grow and develop, many changes are made, which I will discuss later under another topic.

3. *The booster and his methods.* The booster, as his name indicates, is the member of the committee who is particularly responsible for the attendance. In selecting the booster, we should look for

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advertising and promotional ability. As I write, a certain booster, Mr. M., comes to my mind. He typically illustrates the design and function of this feature of the organization scheme. He was one of our most prominent citizens, formerly a banker, now a successful owner and director of one of the largest insurance and real-estate businesses in the entire State; he was a veritable dynamo of energy and one of the largest advertisers in the city. When I appointed him as booster of one of our meetings he was considerably surprised, but after a brief interview gladly consented. He had not attended prayer-meeting for a number of years, if ever at all, and I was told by many that he would not consent to serve, for he could never be induced even to attend a mid-week service. He seldom attended a Sunday evening service, and his Sunday morning attendance also was quite irregular.

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The enthusiasm with which he attacked the job was indeed heartening. His pals and associates were amazed and attempted to rally him about his inconsistency, but he rebuffed them with the reply: "But these meetings are different, so I am told, and what I gather from those who are attending these mid-week services convinces me that they are snappy and full of pep, and just the kind of meeting fellows like you and me will enjoy. Come out and let's look the proposition over." He worked like a Trojan for his service, and was the first one to shove the attendance over the 200 mark.

Before describing his methods of boosting, I must first complete the story of this man's service to the church. His first attendance was on the Wednesday, one week previous to his meeting, when, according to our program, the booster for the following meeting is given five minutes to boost his meeting. He had

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never made a speech at any church service, but he electrified us with his confession of indifference and his determination to get behind all the church activities. He won the support of the audience, and from that time was one of the leading spirits in all the affairs of the church. A few months later he was elected to the board of deacons, chosen as chairman of the every-member canvass committee, made chairman of church finance committee, selected as general chairman of a great revival campaign, and was forceful in many other ways. When it was decided a little later to lift the church debt, he was the first to offer to be one of five to pay the entire debt. The other four were easily found, and the debt was paid within thirty days. He has continued his enthusiastic interest in a church in another community, and facetiously remarks that the mid-week service is the *best* service of the church.

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This man is typical of many others who have been discovered, re-enlisted and interested in church work through the task of boosting, and doing a type of work that gave opportunity to use their peculiar talents most effectively. Not having done anything unusual for the church, this Mr. M. bought space in a daily paper and gladly spent \$50 in advertising his meeting. He appealed to the men's Bible class to support him, and a large number responded.

Some of the outstanding advertising schemes used by the various boosters are as follows:

(1) Special enlistment of Bible-school classes and church organizations to attend in a body.

(2) Unique newspaper display advertising.

(3) Special notices, printed in red, distributed at doors of the church at both Sunday services.

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(4) Speech of booster at previous mid-week meeting, announcing his program and emphasizing special features.

(5) Church bulletins, bulletin-boards at church, slides at moving-picture shows, etc.

(6) Photographs of crowds, prominent speakers, etc., used in daily press.

(7) Division of congregation into alphabetical groups and conducting an attendance contest.

(8) Various contests between classes and organizations.

(9) Purchasing from one hundred to five hundred post-cards, distributing them by "tens" to individuals, who would write a personal invitation to "ten" others.

(10) Printing programs in advance and mailing them to every family of the church.

(11) Have department stores and other concerns connected with the church en-

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close a printed program in every wrapped package delivered.

(12) Use stereopticon at previous Sunday evening service for a few minutes, announcing programs.

(13) Display cards in store windows.

(14) Written and verbally enforced invitation to luncheon clubs, especially when one of their members is the speaker.

It is extremely important that the booster of the meeting for the week following be present at the previous meeting and tie up all the forces used and secured by the last booster. Ample time should be given at every meeting for the booster of the next meeting to make his appeal for the support of all present. Frequently these announcements were very unique and appealing. For instance, one booster had ten men to accompany him to the previous meeting, none of the ten having ever attended one of our mid-week meetings, and had them stand to be

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introduced. He then said to the booster of that evening: "I have brought ten new recruits to your meeting; how many will you bring to mine?" This had a marked effect upon the audience, and emphasized the seriousness with which the next booster was attacking his job.

A good booster surrounds himself with a body of able assistants, and they stir the Sunday audiences from center to circumference with their insistent and persistent invitations. One booster with nine assistants resolved to extend fifty invitations each at the services on Sunday. The sociability of that Sunday was very noticeable, and the entire congregation was impressed with the scheme. These ten also resolved to extend a definite number of personal invitations daily, and the results were marvelous. The entire congregation will feel the impact of the attack of a good booster, and the reaction is favorable and altogether wholesome.

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4. *The hand-shaker and his job.* I have intimated that this is the place where the unknown, unobserved, unused, retiring, timid and shy members of the church can be used most effectively. While I have seen several men brought from obscurity and inactivity through serving as boosters, and become proficient leaders of meetings, the field of the hand-shaker has been by far the most productive of rich finds and remarkable discoveries. This task of the hand-shaker is a combination of reception committee, usher and committee on arrangements. He supervises the janitor and sees that everything is in readiness for the meeting. He supplies every one with a song-book, and sees that every one is comfortably seated. Decoration of the building, provision and arrangement of flowers and ventilation of the building are also his tasks. Some hand-shakers upon certain occasions have distinguished themselves in their decora-

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tion of the hall. This, of course, was not obligatory at any time, but an optional privilege. Others have provided an abundant supply of beautiful flowers and made other seasonal displays of their ingenuity. But it is at every door and in the clasp of every hand that the hand-shaker finds his greatest opportunity of service.

I will relate an experience with Mr. B., a typical hand-shaker among the many I have known. I was not at all well acquainted with him when I selected him as hand-shaker and published his name in the bulletin. He was a laborer in one of the factories of the city, and, as I recall, had not attended any church service for several months. He surprised me with a call at my office just a few days after I had mailed him a marked copy of the bulletin. "I came down to see you about that appointment," said he. "Why, I haven't even attended church, I am sorry to say, for nearly four months."

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“That’s exactly the reason I appointed you, Mr. B.,” I replied, “for we need you, and I know you will enjoy this service, and can do it splendidly.”

“Well, to be frank with you,” a broad grin creeping over his face, “I have already decided I’d do it, and I came by to tell you of a scheme I have in mind and see whether or not you would approve it.”

“Out with it; that’s fine,” said I, reaching for his hand in appreciation of his fine spirit. “What have you in mind?”

“Well, there’s a bunch of mighty fine fellows up there at the factory that never go to church anywhere. I believe I can get ten or a dozen of them to come down with me that night and help me shake hands. Now, mind you, they’re a little rough-looking, but they’re all right, and if you think nobody will object to it, I’d like to bring that bunch along to help me.”

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“Say,” I exclaimed, “that’s a capital idea! Of course nobody could object to such a fine scheme as that. While it may seem strange to have strangers welcoming the regulars, it will be a novelty that will be extremely refreshing. You have struck upon a novel trick indeed, and it will add spirit and zest to our meeting. Bring as many as you can.”

I anticipated the approach of that evening with increasing eagerness, and was one of the first arrivals, so that I would miss none of the fun. Many times before the fragrance of flowers would greet the attendant immediately upon entering the door, but on this night the entire hall reeked with the odor of *hair tonic*. Fifteen tall, robust friends of Mr. B. were on the job, each with a fresh hair-cut and fragrant with the most odorous tonic the barber-shop afforded. Dressed in their best, somewhat abashed, but determined to do or die, they gallantly de-

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fended the portals against any man, woman or child who dared to enter surreptitiously and escape the crushing squeeze of those viselike hands. The hand-shaking of that night is a never-to-be-forgotten event in the annals of that institution. The "painful" surprise of the staid old elder, as he extended his pliant palm to those molders of steel; the wincing of the fair and the cringing of the frail; the uproarious reaction to the unusualness of it all—set the meeting agog with good-natured laughter, and resulted in unanimous appreciation of the services of Mr. B. and his friends.

Like unto the booster, Mr. M., this was but the beginning of many interesting events in the religious experience of the group from the factory. They came again, and others came with them. I was invited to hold services at the factory at the noon hour, and finally a little mission was established in that section of the

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city. I pitched a tent there for a revival campaign, and had the pleasure of baptizing many citizens of that section in the years following. Some brilliant leaders of mid-week meetings have been developed from hand-shakers in the course of years. This is a most fruitful recruiting-ground, for there are many diamonds in the rough to be found among the timid, unknown and unused members of our churches.

CHAPTER VII.

HANDLING DEVELOPMENTS.

1. *The matter of subjects and themes.*
The problem of selecting an attractive and interesting subject or theme for the meeting is the first to be solved by the leader and his committee. I have no quarrel to make with our religious periodicals, but I am frank to say that the "prayer-meeting topics" appearing weekly in the religious press are more of a hindrance than a help to the "mid-week meeting" as we have been conducting it. These topics, no doubt, are designed to fit into the program and fill a need in the conduct of the old-fashioned "prayer-meeting," but I have found them of very little help in the modern mid-week service. These programs must have local

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color and sparkle with community interest. While the subjects and themes that are submitted to the pastor by various members of his congregation as timely and desirable may not be as pedagogical or as dignified as those appearing in church magazines, they do have a local pull on a certain group, will oftentimes appeal to the curiosity of other groups, and will result in the creation of an interest that would be impossible with the published impersonal topic. Just as the personal equation is most effective in the sermon, even so it is in the mid-week service.

Because of their dependence for years upon the religious press for the provision of a "prayer-meeting topic," there is a tremendous tendency on the part of leaders to use those topics. When we first began these meetings on the new scale, frequently at the first meeting of a committee the leader would open up as

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follows: "Well, what's the subject for that week? Has anybody a topic-card or paper with him?" Such a statement is *prima-facie* evidence of that leader's ignorance of one of the most fundamental elements in the design of a mid-week service. He has failed to realize that much of the success of his meeting depends on the selection of a timely and appropriate subject, and at the very outset he is unconsciously permitting some one, who knows nothing of the local situation or need, to select the subject for that meeting. Here is the opportunity for the pastor to correct and check that tendency, and reveal to the leader the importance of selecting a theme that has a local appeal and application. There is always an abundant supply at hand, and no room for evasion at this point.

Another danger is found in the use of a "series of subjects." A "series" usually becomes "serious" in the sense of

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monotonous and tiresome. I have known good mid-week meetings to perish from an attack of "series." Notwithstanding the evident falling off in attendance and listlessness on the part of practically all except the promoters and speakers, those in charge kept right on, killing off a few more supporters every Wednesday night. This occurred where there was a "standing committee" in charge of the meetings, and, as is often the case, disposed of this task at one sitting, with one fell sweep, by prescribing a "series" and then leaving the poor patient to groan and struggle from the dose without ascertaining the reaction thereto, or diminishing, increasing or changing the treatment as conditions might demand. Having a different committee for each Wednesday night solves this problem to some degree. Nevertheless, I have seen committees get together and some "series" advocate dominate the group and introduce the

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series. Not in all, but in most instances, the series plan is dangerous. Whenever this kind of program begins to wane in any manner, it should be discontinued at once, irrespective of the future programs arranged or speakers secured. This will be considered again under the heading, "The Pastor and the Meeting."

If I may be permitted to be dogmatic just once, let me say: "Kill any program that threatens to kill the meeting." It is out of the scope of this treatise to enumerate all of the subjects that have been effectively used in the past ten years of my experience, and many must be left to the conjecture and surmise of the reader. Then, too, by the very exigency of the occasion, subjects and themes usable and applicable in my field may prove unsatisfactory in others. But it may be helpful to suggest fields from which an inexhaustible supply of subjects, adaptable to most any community, can be secured.

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2. *Articulating the mid-week service with community interests.* It is very desirable to relate the church to all the worth-while organizations and movements in the community. Regarding the mid-week meeting as a *forum*, a splendid opportunity is afforded the membership of the church to become informed concerning community movements, a better understanding of which will probably mean much in the advancement of the interests of the church. The forum idea is attractive as well as instructive. The following organizations have brought to the church in times past a vast amount of helpful information and inspiration: The Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Boy Scouts, County Farm Bureau, Red Cross, Associated Charities, Community Chest, Chamber of Commerce, American Legion, luncheon clubs, literary clubs, women's clubs, lodges, city administration, schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, health

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boards, etc. I recall a splendid presentation of the various types of Y. M. C. A. service by a general secretary, discussing "The Why of the Y." A male quartet and a gymnasium class from the "Y" accompanied him, and with music and beautiful drills left an indelible impression of appreciation and sympathetic understanding upon the large audience that greeted them. A mandolin and guitar club from the Y. W. C. A. were our guests upon the occasion of the visit of their secretary, who spoke upon the subject of "A Helpless Girl in a Strange Town." I need not argue the interest aroused and the benefit derived from such programs as these.

The Boy Scout executive, with a troop of well-drilled Scouts demonstrating the sacred and patriotic lessons learned in scouting, provided another thrilling program. The president of the Farm Bureau, describing the enlistment of scores

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of boys and girls in the "calf clubs," "corn clubs," etc., discussed "Our Country Cousins." Just recently the president of our local Red Cross unit, who is also a member of the executive committee of the National Red Cross, and who was sent to the Mississippi Valley during the flood by Mr. Hoover, stirred our souls with his interesting, pathetic story of America's greatest flood. It is needless to state that our large auditorium was filled. In our city there are eighteen co-operating organizations articulated with the "Community Chest." Each of these organizations has a legitimate claim upon the sympathy and support of every citizen. A description of the type of work done and service rendered by each will prove interesting to any congregation, as well as instructive and helpful, and they welcome the opportunity to furnish an interesting speaker and give demonstrations at the mid-week service.

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The American Legion Post in any community, with its inspiring drum corps (when it has one), with flags and ceremony, will delight every one with a patriotic program and an inspiring address on "The Constitution." Luncheon clubs, attending in a body and discussing their respective objectives, such as "Work among Crippled Children;" literary clubs, providing an eloquent speaker on "The Literary Value of the Bible," or some kindred topic; women's clubs, with their welfare work, and hosts of others, will provide a mid-week service with many helpful programs. The church that capitalizes community organizations is wise, and the mid-week meeting affords the most appropriate and best means of doing so.

It has been intimated elsewhere that, as respects the local church organizations, the mid-week service may be used very effectively as a clearing-house. Among the many groups and organizations of the

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local church that will not only provide a program, but be delighted and strengthened in doing so, are those which may be found in the majority of churches: the Bible school, Endeavor societies, administrative board, board of education, and departments of finance, extension, missions, dramatics, recreation, etc. Missionary interest among those of the congregation who are not members of the women's society or any of the circles can be greatly stimulated and increased by the programs these organizations can present at the mid-week service. I have witnessed splendid programs of our Women's Missionary Society that should have been enjoyed by the entire congregation. They were repeated at a mid-week service, much to the delight of the large audience present and to the encouragement of the society. One or more mid-week services each year can be given very profitably to the various departments for their reports

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of work done and plans made for the future. Especially is this true of the finance department in respect to the every-member canvass, semi-annual and annual reports. "Endeavor Day" programs, Endeavor plays, missionary and Bible-school dramas and pageants can be used most satisfactorily at the mid-week hour. The inspiration of large crowds makes it desirable for these organizations to use Wednesday night, and they feel justified in swinging all their resources back of the program. This insures even a larger attendance and demands of the organization its very best performance.

The number of outside agencies, both State and national, that are continually making demands upon the pastor for one of his Sunday services, seems to increase from year to year. Were every worthy request to be granted, there would be very few services left to the pastor for the accomplishment of his particular task.

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Many of these can be shunted off to the mid-week service with entire satisfaction to all concerned, and with no deleterious effect upon the success of the mid-week service *per se*. I have found the following organizations of much help and inspiration to us through their programs at our mid-week services: State Missionary Society, State and district C. E. unions, State Bible-school associations of our own brotherhood, and also the Interdenominational Association; our own church college within the State, and the State University; eleemosynary institutions, penal institutions, Anti-saloon League, W. C. T. U., U. C. M. S. in all its departments, independent missionary agencies, etc. I have not found it difficult to secure prominent representatives from various institutions within the State to speak at our mid-week services. Most of these institutions have representatives touring the State at certain seasons of

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the year, and are pleased to receive an invitation to address us. In some instances representatives have been sent direct from the institution without any expense to us, at the time most suitable to us. I am positive that our congregations have been deprived of many fine programs simply because they have not asked for them. For instance, the State university of any State, through its extension department, alone can render great service to a majority of our churches. Splendid moving-picture educational reels, or stereopticon slides, can be secured free of cost. Their circulating library and other features are of service to all citizens. A representative from the institution will be glad to come and set forth the many advantages afforded by our State universities. The warden or chaplain of the penitentiary, or the superintendent of one of the State Hospitals for the Insane, are likewise obtainable for

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addresses, and are happy to be of service to the churches. I have discovered that, when I intimate that we conduct a meeting where an address on their work is altogether appropriate, that we earnestly desire it and we can guarantee them an audience of three hundred or more on Wednesday night, most all of our State institutions, educational and otherwise, are pleased to favor us with a forceful speaker at such a time as we may choose.

Every congregation should keep in close touch with the work of the State Missionary Society and Bible-school associations. Great inspirational mid-week programs can be built around the work of these organizations, and our secretaries are always willing to serve. An outstanding mid-week service in a certain community can be very influential in determining the itinerary of many of our State and national church specialists. Likewise, Faculty members of our own church

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school, scholars of national reputation, can be secured at a very nominal cost for an address at a mid-week service. When we plan and prepare great programs, we may expect great crowds, which in turn will make it possible to secure other great speakers who will draw great crowds, and so our meetings grow.

3. *Varying the whole scheme.* The scheme of a different committee for each Wednesday night, but all of the same design, and the various members functioning as I have outlined, is by far the most successful of all that I have tried. But there are times when suspension of this plan is advisable and variety should be introduced. A vacation is good for the congregation as well as for the pastor, and he returns to an anxious people, who swing behind his program, with greater fervor because of the temporary separation. So it is when this plan is abandoned now and then, it comes back with

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an increase of power and appreciation. There are occasions when the entire program should be given over to certain groups or organizations, and this can be done without injurious effect upon the continuity feature of the committee plan. For instance, the young people's department of the Bible school had charge of one of our very best programs. The committee idea was carried out in this way: The superintendent of the department was the leader of the meeting and secured one of our national Bible-school specialists as speaker. A class of young men served as boosters, a class of young ladies provided the music, and another class of young ladies served as handshakers. This class was quite original in their service, and demonstrated how the smallest and most unostentatious position may be exalted by the regard in which it is held. These girls—about twenty of them, all dressed in white, with golden

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girdles about their waists—presented a beautiful picture at the doors. They gave flowers to all who entered, and ushered the guests to their seats with a most impressive air of dignity and importance. This color scheme was again impressively carried out later in the meeting, when a “treble-clef club” of sixteen young ladies, dressed in like manner to the handshakers, delighted the audience with two beautiful vocal selections.

In building the program of the mid-week meeting for a quarter in advance, it is advisable to include at least one meeting of the kind just described. Sometimes one each month is desirable. After two or three years’ experience in the conduct of systematic and well-planned mid-week services, one will discover that certain definite programs for each season of the year can become regular features, and at least 50 per cent. of the services of the entire year can be more or less def-

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initely determined at the beginning of the year. Until it is tried earnestly and thoroughly for two or three years, one who has never attempted this scheme can scarcely believe that there are not enough Wednesday nights for the possible definite seasonal programs that develop.

I will illustrate by mentioning a few regular annual programs. If the business affairs of the church are conducted on the calendar-year basis, then some Wednesday night in January can be most effectively used for the annual reports of all departments, presentation of the church "Year Book," "Honor Roll," and any other special features incident to the conclusion of a church year. A meeting in July can be devoted to similar semi-annual reports, and frequently quarterly reports are of sufficient interest to demand recognition at a mid-week service.

Again (in October or November), a mid-week service should be given to the set-

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up of the every-member canvass, when an outstanding speaker should be secured for an address on stewardship. One meeting each month can be given over with all safety to *special features*, such as was illustrated by the young people's department program mentioned above. I have one special feature that requires one Wednesday night each month of the year. A Thanksgiving program in November, a Christmas program in December, an Easter program and Pentecost program in the spring, an ordination service for church and Bible-school officials following their election, and a Young People's Conference program in the summer can be regular, annual affairs.

Calculating a special-feature program once a month, twenty-one meetings may be devoted to regular annual events. These meetings, properly articulated with the committee scheme of organization, provide ample variety.

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4. *The pastor and the meeting.* We have come now in our discussion, perhaps, to the crux of the whole matter. The pastor holds the key to the situation. He must desire great mid-week services and be willing to pay the price demanded. They are costly and require nerve, energy, courage, vision, faith, untiring devotion and sacrifice. First of all, the congregation must be converted to the idea sufficiently to be willing to relinquish the old-fashioned prayer-meeting and trust the pastor's vision and plan. He, then, must be willing to give the time and thought to the meetings that they require, in order to overcome habit, custom and precedent. Great tact and diplomacy should be used, and the most careful consideration given to all criticisms and objections, lest a small faction of opposition be created when it could have been avoided. He should retain the power of appointment of all committees, and be

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general director of all meetings. His authority should be recognized and respected at all times by all concerned. There is a slogan which I think every church would do well to frame and follow:

“Authority without responsibility is dangerous;

Responsibility without authority is unfair.”

If the pastor requests and expects the authority in the conduct of these meetings—and it is given him—then he should assume all responsibility for their success or failure. If, on the other hand, the responsibility of their success is imposed upon him by the congregation, then he should be given absolute authority.

Many pastors have launched splendid mid-week services that have flourished for a season, because the pastor led and conducted all meetings. He had a series of interesting addresses that attracted, gripped and held the crowds, but of ne-

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cessity this series terminated, or the pastor was called out of the city for a few weeks. When he returned he had to do all the preparatory work over again and supply another series of addresses equally as attractive and as interesting as the former. This *simply can not be done* year after year, for either the crowd will break from the pastor, or he will break under the load. The mid-week service is quite different in some very vital respects from the Sunday services, where the pastor can preach for years in succession to crowded houses, or the organized Bible class, where the teacher can draw and hold an increasing number from year to year. In the case of a great Bible class, the most successful ones are built around the teacher, and it should be so. But the pastor who builds the church around his personality is making a pathetic mistake. Likewise, it is a serious mistake to build the mid-week service

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around the personality or capability of the pastor, and make it dependent upon his individual effort or contributions. While he should be in absolute charge and held responsible, he should not assert that authority by leading all meetings in person, nor meet his responsibility by attempting to do all the work necessary himself. His leadership should be manifested in his selection of leaders. He should give much thought to the appointment of his committees, and realize the importance of giving all his time required by the follow-up plan. He should watch the procedure of each meeting and be courageous enough to use drastic measures whenever necessary. Emergencies will arise for which he must be prepared. For instance, I have been notified on Wednesday morning by the leader of the meeting that he is leaving town at once and has made no provision for a substitute. In such a case, if his program had been

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arranged, a substitute leader could be easily provided. But it is when a whole program collapses unexpectedly that the pastor is confronted with a difficult situation. This should be anticipated, however, and an entire program should be held in reserve for such an emergency. It is possible and advisable for the pastor to keep on hand reserve programs. No mention of the collapse should be made to the audience, and no apology ever offered. I would never give an opportunity to any committee to excuse its non-performance to the audience, as I was the one responsible, and their excuse to me was all that was necessary. A few collapses or slips in programs, catching the pastor unprepared for the emergency, may start disintegration difficult to correct.

The pastor should not ignore the significance and importance of every element of the follow-up system previously mentioned. It is very necessary for him to

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keep in close touch with all committees long in advance of their time of service. Definite explanations and instructions given in ample time will prevent many unnecessary problems arising. At an institute in Canton, Ohio, I was asked the following question: "What can be done when the pastor is not interested and does not attempt to build a great mid-week service?" That is difficult to answer for the very reason that the pastor is, by all means, the logical director of these meetings. However, a wide-awake standing committee on mid-week meetings can accomplish a great deal by following the same program and employing the same tactics of a successful pastor in this regard. The committee can be given authority and assume the responsibility in lieu of the pastor. By following the suggestions and programs outlined herein, I see no reason why such a committee could not be eminently successful.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPECIAL FEATURES.

1. *Ordination and presentation of of-
ficiary.* Several special features, such as
Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, Christ-
mas, etc., have been considered under
“Varying the Whole Scheme.” There are
some of a little different nature that I
wish to discuss a little more fully. I have
found the ordination of elders, deacons
and Bible-school officers of extreme in-
terest and great value. By no means do
I intend to convey the idea that there is
an impartation of spiritual gifts in such
an ordination, but it has the value of ded-
ication to a sacred task. It is also very
helpful to bring the entire administrative
board and Bible-school Faculty before the
congregation for introduction. It im-

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presses each official to have him stand and be reminded of the importance of the position to which he has been chosen. Furthermore, it is a public acknowledgment on his part of his acceptance of the office. The congregation is impressed by the fine body composing the administrative board, and personal confidence is strengthened. This oftentimes is the only opportunity the congregation has to see and know all members of the Bible-school Faculty, and a more personal and sympathetic interest in the Faculty is inspired.

A message from the chairman of the board and from the superintendent of the Bible school, followed by a forceful address by some visiting minister on "The Sacredness of the Task of the Church Officer," will prove a most wholesome feature for a mid-week service.

2. *Dramatics and special recognition.* The mid-week service with a large attendance affords a splendid opportunity for

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the dramatic and recreational departments to function. I am confident that not enough recognition, on the part of the church, is given to the activities of our young people. Recently a splendid Christian Endeavor play was given at the Endeavor hour and in the Endeavor room before a group of Endeavorers and such other church-members as have been regularly interested in the work of our Endeavor societies. The room was crowded, but such a play as was presented merited an audience that would tax the capacity of our church auditorium. I extended an invitation to the C. E. president to present that play at a mid-week service, and she fairly leaped for joy at the privilege, replying: "That was what we were all hoping for." All our organizations count it a privilege to be given a Wednesday evening for their programs, and they reciprocate by giving the very best program possible and swinging all their forces be-

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hind the meeting to make it one of the largest of the year in attendance.

We are fortunate in having a splendid gymnasium in connection with our church, and no part of our plant is used more constantly or more efficiently than our gym. I have studied the athletic work of several churches and have come to some very definite conclusions regarding some causes of failure to make the work effective. Chief among the causes of failure is the lack of support on the part of the church in general. I do not refer to financial support. In most cases this is provided. I mean the vital personal interest of the membership in the teams, players and games of the church. It is perfectly natural for our boys and girls wearing the colors and playing the games of our church to expect and demand the support of the church in the matter of attendance at the games and contests, and in recognition of exceptional skill or distinguished

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service. The main reason for this lack of support on the part of the majority is a *lack of information*. A mere announcement, oftentimes made in an apologetic manner at the Bible school, when every one is restless because the time for closing is past, or from the pulpit by a minister, who gives the impression that it is a more or less questionable announcement to be made at such a service, will never elicit the interest and draw the attendance that the game or program of the recreational department merits and deserves.

A program and policy of educating the membership to the virtue and value of a recreational department is absolutely necessary to the successful continuance of the department. It must be given an opportunity to place its claims before the congregation. Neither of the Sunday services offers an advisable or appropriate opportunity to do so. The mid-week ser-

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vice does. I recall a delightful, interesting and inspiring mid-week program put on by the recreational department, when a splendid, clean, manly team of basketball players of our church were introduced as the winners of the church-league pennant, and a loving-cup was presented. The whole congregation felt the thrill of victory, and there is no gainsaying the enthusiasm aroused and the interest inspired in the work of that department.

The mid-week service also affords an outlet of expression to the department of dramatics, which is most helpful. It need not be feared that the mid-week service will suffer from being used in such a manner. In fact, the delightful variety, not only of program, but of *personnel*, guarantees a variety in the attendance that constantly increases the continuous interest in the mid-week service.

3. *Talent night.* I am of the opinion that in the majority of our churches we

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fail to ascertain and exploit the talents and capabilities of the members. Certain leaders lead, certain teachers teach, and usually the same groups of workers are called upon to do all that is to be done, not necessarily because of their peculiar *fitness*, but because of their peculiar *willingness*. It is a trite and familiar saying that "there is always a few in every church that do all the work." I wonder if we haven't been too willing to accept this statement as true without making the feeblest effort to ascertain the reason for its being so. It seems to be a natural tendency on the part of the modern churchman to wrap his talent in a napkin and conceal it. Therefore, it becomes the tedious task of the minister and others to discover and utilize the hidden and latent talents of the various members.

At the close of his marvelous lecture on "Acres of Diamonds," I was surprised to hear Dr. Russell H. Conwell say one

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evening in my home town: "Now I want to meet the great men of this city at the platform." Pausing a few moments to study the marked surprise on all our faces, he continued: "Of course, you are surprised that I should think this town contains any great men. It does, however; all towns do; but you have become so accustomed to each other that you have failed to recognize the greatness and possibilities of greatness that scores of your citizens possess." That set me thinking, and I am frank to confess that I discovered several great men after that, whom I had known, but never appreciated or understood. For some time it has been our custom to present to every new member of our church an "information card," to be filled out and returned to our office. From this card we ascertain previous services rendered (if any), their choice of fields of service, and an enumeration of the talents they may feel they possess.

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We have been extremely successful in getting these cards used. From them we have built a "Talent Book," where the capabilities of these members are properly classified. From this book we originated the idea of "Talent Night" at the mid-week service. The frequency of "Talent Night" depends, of course, upon the number of additions and the success achieved in the use of the "information card." Instrumentalists of all kinds, vocalists, dramatic readers, teachers, etc., are placed on the programs of Talent Night, and splendid leaders and helpers have been discovered in this manner. This is a special feature for the mid-week meeting which is most constructive in its nature, as well as delightfully entertaining.

Some years ago, at one of our Talent Night programs, a mother of three of our fine young ladies in the church, who had been a member of the congregation for

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years, performed professionally, and displayed a talent which had earned her a handsome living as a young lady, but which none outside her family, until this time, was aware she possessed. Recently a young man coming into our fellowship indicated on the information card that he was a "crayon artist." He was placed on a Talent Night program and thrilled the audience with his skill. The Christian Endeavorers secured his services as artist for their paper; he made all of our special posters for advertising, and was of splendid service in many other ways.

4. *Introduction service.* Of all the special features successfully introduced into our mid-week service scheme, I regard this one as the most uniformly attractive and helpful. While its success largely depends upon regular additions to the church, it is also an inspiration to an increase of additions. For quite a long while the number of additions to the

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church have made possible a regular monthly introduction service. If possible, this service should be held on the evening of the last Wednesday in every month. Where the new members come into the church either by confession and baptism, or by statement, I inform them at that time of the introduction service on the last Wednesday night of that month, and impress upon them the importance of their attendance, and that we will expect them to let nothing prevent them from being present. It is psychologically advantageous to tie up every new member with some definite and specific future meeting, and at that meeting further secure him by way of definite articulation with the program and activities of the church. Then, one week before the last Wednesday night of the month, a special personal letter is written to every new member for that month, reminding him of introduction night.

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When that evening arrives a large crowd is always on hand, for when any one attends one of these meetings he always wants to attend others. After the usual devotional period, all new members for the month, and any new members of the previous months who for unavoidable reasons had not been present at the introduction program for their month, are called to the front, where they form a line facing the congregation. Beginning at one end of the line, each of them gives his name *in full*, the place where he resided before coming to this city (if such was the case), and his present street address and house number.

It has been previously announced during the meeting that any one in the audience who can call the full name of all these new members will be given a nice prize. They are not permitted to write the names, and must give them from memory as soon as the introduction is con-

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cluded, without having any one repeat his name. All names are given clearly and distinctly, and, in case of children, the pastor repeats the name so that all in the audience may hear. In all such meetings conducted the prize has been won only twice. The *prize* feature is attractive, however, for practically every one in the audience will consciously or unconsciously attempt to remember the names, and, in so doing, will identify the name with the person so definitely that they will at least remember the surname, and can greet that new member each time thereafter by calling his name. After one or more have attempted to win the prize (usually failing), then a person in the audience is selected to come forward and stand facing one of the new members. One of the audience for each of the new members is called front. The selection from the audience is determined by the type and appearance of the new member

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—one of like sex, age, appearance and type being chosen for each new member. This line forms in front of and facing the new members, and each is given just one minute to introduce himself to the one directly opposite. A bell is sounded after one minute, and two by two the lines return to their seats, the host accompanied by the guest, to where the host was seated.

After the new members have been distributed through the audience, each one in the care of and guest of a former member, the pastor addresses them. He tells those who have been called forward to stand in front of and escort new members to a seat, that they are to sponsor those particular new members for one month. They will acquaint them with the city, with the church membership and church buildings, give them all information they may desire concerning the activities of the church, enlist them in church

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work, and render all possible assistance to them that they may be happy in this fellowship.

It is not possible, in the scope of this treatise, to recount all of the fine friendships that have grown out of these special mid-week meetings. I have known children to influence the removal of their home from one section of the city to another that they might reside near to or attend the same school as boys or girls who were their sponsors at one of these meetings. I have seen women go shopping with new members for whom they were sponsors, introducing them to the best shops and markets. A little more than a year ago a brilliant attorney from Pittsburgh, with his family, came into our fellowship. On introduction night, as I looked over the audience for a sponsor for this new lawyer, I espied another prominent attorney, formerly from Illinois, and selected him as sponsor. They

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were strangers as they stood opposite each other that night at the mid-week service, but now are partners in one of the leading law firms of our city, bearing the names of these two men only. One is an elder, the other a deacon and vice-chairman of our administrative board. The "Introduction Night" is a great monthly feature of our mid-week service scheme.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH AS A WORKING INSTITUTION.

BECAUSE of the vital relation between the mid-week service and all of the activities of the church, I want to conclude this treatise with a brief discussion of the organization of the entire church.

There is need for a *practical* consideration of the church. It is the spiritual body of Christ, the kingdom of God, yet so frequently we neglect the practical phases of our church life and spend our time in useless and futile theoretical discussions. We must realize that, practically speaking, the church is quite a different institution from what it was a generation ago. The automobile and movie theater have had much to do with bringing about a transformation of the church

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in a practical sense. We have been forced to more businesslike administration, the employment of better business methods, and the recognition of the existence of unavoidable competition. A sentimental appeal to the public to support the church is non-effective, and legitimate advertising and efficient organization are necessary. So, with due regard to its spiritual nature and task, I want to view the church as an institution.

1. The church as an institution.

(a) It is a religious institution. It must have a program for the religious development of its constituency. There should be due regard given the various ages, types and abilities. Jesus said to Peter: "Feed my sheep. . . . Feed my lambs." I wonder if He was not suggesting a consideration of the variety of people that would be bound together under His banner. Yet it has not been a generation ago when in the vast majority of

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churches the entire religious program was built around a peculiar and particular group. There was little consideration given the youth and their problems, and the masses in our larger cities were not reached.

Only as the church left its stately, cold cathedral and established missions in the slums and congested centers of population, spoke the language of the throngs, and provided a program built especially for them, were the masses reached and served. The great men's Bible classes throughout the country to-day, meeting in theaters and municipal auditoriums, are evidence of the possibilities of the church to reach men where it employs the legitimate business tactics and builds its program with an eye single to the welfare of each and every individual, rather than to a precedent, creed, custom or whim which frequently determines the programs of the church.

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There should be also a constantly increasing vision of the magnitude of the task of the church and of each individual's responsibility. Business institutions are continually comparing one month's business with the last, this year's business with last year's, and establishing new goals. The religious program of the church should be so constructed as that individual spiritual growth may be expected. In our desire to show a gain in membership, or to report a large number of additions, or a new building, we sometimes overlook the most vital phase of our work—"growing souls." I can not see much virtue in reporting 100 additions, 250 pastoral calls, ten thousand letters written, etc., and fail to feed and care for those that have been won. In a large percentage of our churches the sermons from week to week and month to month can no more be related and articulated than if they were preached by dif-

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ferent men entirely, and strangers to the field. This is indicative of the entire religious program, and consequently spiritual growth is nil as far as the program is concerned.

It must have a program for the religious development of the community where it is located. The church can not ignore the community interests and problems. If it is an industrial community, the church should prepare itself for a service peculiar to industries. If it is an agricultural community, the church should interest itself in agriculture, and be able and ready to render intelligent service particularly adaptable to agriculturists whose religious problems and needs would by no means be necessarily similar to those of an industrial community.

Most essential of all, however, is the need for the church to present a friendly, sympathetic and co-operative attitude toward other religious bodies in the com-

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munity, and especially toward congregations of like faith and order. I have known county-seat churches that were absolutely oblivious to congregations of like faith scattered throughout the county. There was no co-operation and of course no sympathy between them. Such a church will not grow when its program is no broader than its membership roll.

Neither can a church thrive that is hostile and antagonistic to others of different faith. I have known a congregation that refused to permit an announcement of a community affair to be made from the pulpit, merely because the meeting was to be held in a church of which this congregation was extremely jealous. The successful church throws its support behind every worth-while community movement, co-operates in a whole-hearted manner with other religious bodies, and goes the "second mile" with its jealous critics and unfair competitors.

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(b) It is an educational institution. In the past the church has looked to our colleges to provide our ministers and missionaries. But in recent years, with the establishment and equipment of our great State universities, our sons and daughters are forsaking the church colleges for the better-equipped and larger State institutions.

Yet, notwithstanding our failure to support our church colleges by way of patronage, we still expect them to produce, and are appalled at the diminishing ranks of the ministry. The college can not produce them; it can only prepare and train them. The church must produce the preacher, and it is the church's failure to do this that has brought about to a large extent our dearth of preachers to-day.

And the church without a definite and efficient educational program will not do much toward remedying the situation.

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It must have a program for the development of church officers, leaders and teachers. We need to realize that the administrative officers of the church change about every decade, and that the young man whom we are not training to-day will be drafted into service as a deacon ere we realize it. It should not be possible for this present generation to be able to say, as the majority of our present elders and deacons say when called upon for public service: "I am no speaker. I wish I had had the opportunity of being a Christian Endeavorer when I was growing up." Our educational program should enlist our young men and women in active participation in church management and direction, while the older and more experienced ones are still at hand to aid and encourage them, rather than wait for the demise of our leaders, and the youth be pressed into service without the advice and counsel of their elders.

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2. *The church as a "working" institution.*

(a) Creed must be expressed in deed! The secret of *production* is work. Back of the products of a field or factory is labor. If we believe in union, charity, loyalty, the Restoration movement, then we must work for their accomplishment.

(b) We must demonstrate as well as educate. The secret of *success* is work. Back of all really successful men is honest toil. The valedictorian has toiled. The successful statesman and the successful preacher have toiled.

(c) We must reach as well as preach. The secret of *results* is work. Back of all great achievements is activity. Every great bank, factory and church has been active. In order to reach the church members and enlist them in a great program of reaching others, it is necessary to work patiently, untiringly, incessantly and continuously, and so organize the

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church that every member becomes an important cog in the wheel of progress.

3. *A scheme of organization.* The chart on page 2 presents the organization scheme which I have followed for several years. There are, I am sure, many other plans and systems just as good, but I submit this to those who may not have a definite and systematic set-up as a plan that has produced results and proved to be absolutely adequate and satisfactory in my work. I have always regarded the work of the pastor, as far as the business of the church is concerned, as similar to that of a city manager. And the administrative board corresponds to the mayor and commissioners. I am entirely unsympathetic with the dictatorial policy on the part of the pastor. Such a policy inevitably prevents the training of the membership in leadership and responsibility, makes factionalism possible, builds the organization around an individual, and re-

sults in utter collapse and demoralization when that individual is removed. Therefore the administrative board (elders and deacons) is the logical seat of authority, and the pastor is the general manager. I have never thought it proper for an employee to be a member of the board that employs him; consequently, I do not think the pastor should be a member of the administrative board.

The executive committee is composed of the officers of the administrative board (chairman, vice-chairman and secretary), the pastor and the superintendents of all departments. This committee is a clearing-house simply, and in no sense an authoritative body. All authority is vested in the congregation. From the congregation authority is given to the administrative board, and from it to any other boards, committees and individuals it may designate. The superintendents of departments are selected by the administra-

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tive board with respect to their peculiar ability and adaptability to the task, irrespective of whether or not they are members of the administrative board. The executive committee should meet regularly at least quarterly, and also upon the request of the chairman of the administrative board, the minister or any of the departmental superintendents.

The departments are created by action of the administrative board, and, after the original number of departments are established, all additional departments should originate in the administrative department, as indicated in the chart, and then be ratified and recognized by the administrative board. These departments, like unto the executive committee, are not authoritative organizations, but clearing-houses merely, being an assembly into one group of kindred and similar groups for the purpose of articulation and co-operation.

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The superintendent of the department is the presiding officer of these joint groups, conducts the meetings of the department and represents it at the meetings of the administrative board each month, where he reports the work done and presents the department's requests. He is the channel through which flows the information to and from both the administrative board and the department.

The educational department is exceptional in one respect. It is more or less an authoritative department, and is directed by a board of education, the chairman of which is the superintendent of the department. This board is composed of five members and five alternates, elected by the administrative board for one, two, three, four and five years respectively, the election being held simultaneously with the annual election of the members of the administrative board. All authority relating to the groups and or-

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ganizations assembled within that department is vested in this board by the administrative board. No officer or departmental superintendent of the Sunday school is eligible to membership on the board of education. This makes the board a buffer for the Sunday-school officers, which is most advisable and helpful. All teachers and officers of the school, and heads of all groups within the department, must have the approval of this board before selection or election, as the case may be. The policies of the Bible school are determined, and all the business is transacted, by this board, thus leaving the workers' conference period free for inspiration and instruction. The Bible-school superintendent bears a relation to this board similar to that which the pastor bears to the administrative board.

In selecting the *personnel* of the board of education, great care is given by the administrative board that men and women

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of unusual ability and experience be secured. Representation of various groups or organizations on this board is not at all a determining factor in its selection, but rather the individual member's ability to direct all groups.

In the administrative department the vice-chairman of the administrative board automatically becomes the superintendent of the department. In all the other departments the superintendents are elected by the administrative board, as formerly stated. The superintendent of the extension department is the missionary secretary of the church, and all mission funds are disbursed through him. The superintendent of the women's department is, of course, a woman. All organizations of women are assembled within this department, as indicated by the chart.

The idea of each department, except the educational department, being merely a clearing-house should be kept clearly in

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mind. The superintendent has no authority over any integral group, and there are no stated meetings of the department as such. When they are called together by the superintendent or any group in the department, it is for mutual deliberation and discussion of kindred problems. Each group or organization enjoys its individual autonomy. In a department composed of committees only, such as the service department (see chart), the departmental superintendent appoints the chairmen of all committees and adds such committees from time to time as his department needs, or such committees as may be appointed by the administrative board and assigned to his department.

These chairmen of committees, together with the superintendent of the department, constitute a little executive committee of the department which, like unto the executive committee of the church, serves only as a clearing-house for the depart-

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ment. In any departments where the units are distinct organizations, such as the women's department (see chart), then the presidents or chairmen of those groups and organizations, together with the departmental superintendent, constitute the executive committee of the department. These departmental executive committees may meet upon the call of the superintendent or any member thereof, at their option.

Of the many advantages accruing from such a church organization, the outstanding advantage is as follows: Suppose some trouble arose in the "music" of the church handled by the music committee of the service department. That committee could call a meeting of the executive committee of the service department, and, if the matter at hand involved finance, the executive committee of the finance department could be asked to meet with the executive committee of the service de-

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partment. If these two executive committees could not settle the matter, a meeting of the executive committee of the church (see chart) could be called, and in the vast majority of cases the matter could be disposed of without its being necessary to bring it before the regular monthly meeting of the administrative board.

So many matters are brought before church boards, consuming time and discussed by parties unacquainted with the situation; so many trivial controversies are dumped upon the administrative board that should be handled and disposed of by those expected to handle them and who are thoroughly acquainted with the facts, but find it more pleasant to dump them on the board, that it is little wonder that members of the administrative board frequently complain of long meetings and useless harangues, and finally become lax in their attendance. The ad-

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ministrative board should be left free, as far as possible, to consider the weightier matters of the kingdom, and, when relieved of details such as are handled by these subsidiary boards and committees, it will not be so difficult to get busy business men to serve, and serve gladly, on our church boards.

The apparent intricacy of this scheme of organization should not discourage the smaller congregation. It is just as adaptable to the small church as to the large one. It is not necessary to have all the departments outlined on the chart unless they are needed. The various groups or committees within the departments may be determined by the field and the need. The scheme of articulation of similar groups, providing a clearing-house, heading up all in the administrative board and allocating tasks, authority and responsibility may be just as effectively appropriated by one church as another. It is

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the principle of the scheme, and not its minutia of detail, that I regard as exceptionally valuable.

It may appear that this treatment of church organization is somewhat out of place in this treatise on the mid-week service; but, on the contrary, the connection is very close and there is a very vital relationship. The success of practically every movement, organization and enterprise of the church hangs upon the efficiency of the church organization as a whole. Many worth-while attempts and departures have been abortive merely because of an inadequate, inefficient and unsystematic organization of the church. As was stated in the very beginning, "the secret of this possibility is twofold—*organization and program.*" When the entire church looks with serious concern to its thorough organization and challenging program, the mid-week service will be greatly encouraged and strengthened.

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